THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) IPCL has a well established policy approved by its Board for the selection of dealers/agents. Dealers/agents are selected after a systematic scrutiny and assessment of the financial position, commercial experience in the relevant field and the availability of the infrastructural and communication facilities of the applicants.

While there is no specific reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates in the selection of dealers/agents, IPCL has a policy of giving preference to SC/ST candidates who fulfil the minimum requirement.

Arms Licence to M.Ps.

1571. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any provision for providing arms on out of turn basis to Members of Parliament, who hold licence for the purpose at market rate from the ordnance factories;

(b) whether Government are aware of the fact that if a Member of Parliament who is eligible to get licence for buying three arms purchases any arm from the market then in that case he is not eligible to purchase arms on out of turn basis from the Defence Ministry for five years; if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would remove this condition of five years and allow him to buy at least one arm on out of turn basis?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Members of Parliament are eligible for "Out of turn" allotment of a weapon from the Ordnance Factories provided no weapon has been obtained by them ex-import/ex-Ordnance Factories during the preceding five years. The purpose of this condition is to enable large number of persons from all eligible Categories to avail of the facility.

(c) No, Sir.

1572. [*Transferred to the 31st July, 1991*]

Licencing limit

1573. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to raise the industrial licensing limit Rs. 200 crores; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) and (b) No investment limit have been prescribed for exemption from the licensing provisions of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act under the recently announced industrial policy.

Safety of nuclear power plants

1574. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken by Government to ensure the safety of the nuclear power plants in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, plant-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details in this regard for the nuclear power plants in the country are as follows:

(i) Design of the plants based on the concept of defence in depth philosophy provides for safety features in the normal operation of the plant, preventing an accident and

mitigating the consequences should one occur at all. Among various other safety features, containment for the nuclear reactors is provided.

(ii) The plants are constructed as per the standards laid down in the design specifications.

(iii) The plants are operated as per the standards laid down in the Technical Specifications. Qualified and trained personnel are employed for operation.

(iv) Setting up and operation of the plants is continuously reviewed by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). The Board is vested with power and operational freedom for making independent reviews and decisions.

(v) All releases from the plants into the environment are regulated by the limits stipulated by the AERB and are complied with.

(vi) Environmental Survey Laboratories are set up at all the plants before the plant goes into operation and these laboratories are in service throughout the plant life.

(vii) Occupational radiation exposures of personnel working in the plants are regulated by limits stipulated by AERB are the complied with.

(viii) An exclusion zone of 1.6 km radius around each operating station is established where no resident public habitation is permitted.

Pesticide Poisioning

1575. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that pesticides were first developed as patent poisons for chemical warfare and are highly poisonous;

(b) whether Government are aware of the occupational health hazards caused by the pesticides to workers, sprayers and if so, the details of such cases recorded during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that there are over 50 pesticide factories and 800 formulation plants in the country and if so, the details of illnesses reported/recorded; and

(d) whether pesticide poisoning would be notified through an ordinance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Safety of pesticides to man and environment is first scrutinized before allowing its safe and judicious use. Details of occupational health hazards and illnesses are, however, not reported/ recorded under the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968.

(d) No, Sir. Already suitable provisions exist under Section 26 of the Insecticides Act, 1968.

Human encounter with drought

1576. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a book named 'Human encounter with drought' revived by Dr. A. T. Dudania, a well-known soniologist on Kalahandi draught; and

(b) what steps have Government taken so far to meet the situation in Kalahandi and other similar cases in the country for protecting the neglected tribal people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) Government are aware of the book "Human Encounter with Drought."

(b) Short term as well as long term measures, many of them mentioned in the book have been unde-taken by the Government to mitigate the drought in Kalahandi and other similar districts in the country. The short term measures include relief works for generation of wage employment and assistance for provision of grain, fodder, drinking water facilities etc.